DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 459 438 CS 014 576

AUTHOR	Chatel, Regina G., Ed.; Talty, Paula, Ed.
TITLE	Parent Empowerment To Build Children's Literacy Skills.
PUB DATE	2001-01-00
NOTE	68p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Beginning Reading; *Beginning Writing; Early Childhood Education; *Emergent Literacy; Experiential Learning; Parent Child Relationship; *Parent Empowerment; *Parent Participation; Parent Workshops; Reading Aloud to Others

ABSTRACT

This workshop seeks to enable parents to analyze their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills so they can serve as models for their children. It also seeks to support the ongoing, natural process of their children's emerging literacy through thoughtful reading, writing, speaking, and listening home activities. Some key concepts--language learning and usage, reading at home, and writing at home--are defined before the workshop begins, and materials, procedures, and evaluation are discussed. The workshop is organized in two broad parts: Part I consists of (1) Overview; (2) Session I and II Outcomes Transparency; (3) Session I and II Key Concepts; (4) Session I Key Concepts Transparency; (5) Session II Key Concepts Transparency; (6) How and Why Children Use Language Skills--Parent Handout; (7) How and Why Children Use Language Skills--Facilitator Directions; (8) Stages of Emerging Literacy; (9) Reading with Young Children Quiz--Facilitator Directions; (10) Reading with Young Children Quiz--Parent Handout; (11) Sharing a Children's Book--Facilitator Directions; (12) PEER--Explanation and Model, Open-Ended Questions for Reading Aloud; (13) Supporting Independent Writing; and (14) Workshop Evaluation. Part II consists of Additional Parent Resources--Reading with Young Children: It's Never Too Early; Developing Awareness of Printed Language; Practicing Reflective Reading; Developing Phonological Awareness: Play with Language; Learning the Alphabet and Letter Sounds; Playing with Letters and Words; Rereading Familiar Books; Developing Accuracy and Fluency; Reading Writing Connection: Supporting Independent Writing; Letter Formation and Holding a Pencil; Developmental Stages of Spelling; Writing in Kindergarten; and 100 Picture Books Everyone Should Know. (Contains 18 references.) (NKA)

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Parent Empowerment to Build Children's Literacy Skills

Regina G. Chatel
Paula Talty, Editors

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Supporting Independent Literacy
Help Your Child Learn to Read & Write

Developed by Regina G. Chatel, Ph.D.
January, 2001

Sessions I & II

Outcomes

As a result of participation in this workshop, parents will be able to:

- Analyze their own use of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills so they can serve as models for children
- Support the ongoing, natural process of emerging literacy for their children through thoughtful reading, writing, speaking and listening home activities.

Key Concepts

Language Learning and Usage

- Emerging literacy refers to the gradual, ongoing process of developing language skills--listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- Development of language skills begins in infancy and continues throughout life. Children learn about language in the same way they learn about other experiences--by imitating, exploring, experimenting, trying out their ideas, and participating in their cultures.
- Children's language learning is rooted in the caring environment of their homes and families.
- Children first learn to listen and speak. Then they use these and other skills to explore reading and writing. Each language skill contributes to the development of the others.

Reading At Home

- All parents, regardless of their reading skills, can share books with children.
- When read to from infancy, children learn to associate reading with warm, caring feelings. Although the reading techniques and book selections vary according to children's developmental stages, a child can be read to at any age.
- Young children who are read to frequently and regularly are likely to master conventional reading in the early elementary years and have successful learning experiences in school.
- Young children enjoy books with repetition and rhyme. When children hear these books again and again, they memorize the words, join in the reading, and predict what happens next. They pretend to read books to themselves, which is an important step in learning conventional reading.

Writing At Home

- All parents, regardless of their writing skills, can help children with their writing skill development

- All children need to write well for a variety of personal and social reasons.
- All children enjoy writing when it's meaningful, interesting, stress free, and emotionally rewarded by parents.
- Parents can structure a literacy (reading and writing) supportive environment at home.

Materials

- Chart paper
- markers
- assortment of children's books
- sample 'home reading bags'
- **Handouts**
  - Parent Empowerment to Build Children's Literacy Skills (one for each parent)
  - How and Why Children Use Language Skills
  - Emerging Literacy: From Cooing to Conventional Reading And Writing
  - Reading With Your Child Quiz
  - Sharing a Children's Book: PEER
  - Open-Ended Questions for Reading Aloud
  - Supporting Independent Writing: Writing Is...
  - Supporting Independent Writing: Things To Know...
  - Supporting Independent Writing: Pointers for Parents
  - Supporting Independent Writing: Things to Do

Procedures

Facilitators are encouraged to create an interactive environment in which parents feel it is safe to participate. Workshop structure should include:

- individual activities such as the *Reading With Your Child Quiz*
- small and whole group discussions of all of the activities
- facilitator model of various aspects of the workshop such as how to share and discuss a book with a child
- brainstorming, rather than lecturing of ideas and strategies to develop the various writing concepts and ideas

Evaluation

Evaluation of each workshop is vital in order to help parents feel that they have control over the nature and content of the workshops.

Parent evaluations must be analyzed following each workshop; feedback must be used to tailor the next session. It's critical that parents' voices be honored.

Supporting Independent Literacy
Help Your Child Learn to Read & Write

Sessions I & II

Outcomes

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- Support the ongoing, natural process of emerging literacy for their children through thoughtful reading, writing, speaking and listening home activities.

Supporting Independent Literacy
Help Your Child Learn to Read & Write

Sessions I & II

Key Concepts

Language Learning and Usage

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- Development of language skills begins in infancy and continues throughout life. Children learn about language in the same way they learn about other experiences--by imitating, exploring, experimenting, trying out their ideas, and participating in their cultures.
- Children's language learning is rooted in the caring environment of their homes and families.
- Children first learn to listen and speak. Then they use these and other skills to explore reading and writing. Each language skill contributes to the development of the others.

Supporting Independent Literacy
Help Your Child Learn to Read & Write

Sessions I

Key Concept: Reading At Home

- All parents, regardless of their reading skills, can share books with children.
- When read to from infancy, children learn to associate reading with warm, caring feelings. Although the reading techniques and book selections vary according to children's developmental stages, a child can be read to at any age.
- Young children who are read to frequently and regularly are likely to master conventional reading in the early elementary years and have successful learning experiences in school.
- Young children enjoy books with repetition and rhyme. When children hear these books again and again, they memorize the words, join in the reading, and predict what happens next. They pretend to read books to themselves, which is an important step in learning conventional reading.

Supporting Independent Literacy
Help Your Child Learn to Read & Write
Sessions II

Key Concepts
Writing At Home

- All parents, regardless of their writing skills, can help children with their writing skill development
- All children need to write well for a variety of personal and social reasons.
- All children enjoy writing when it's meaningful, interesting, stress free, and emotionally rewarded by parents.
- Parents can structure a literacy (reading and writing) supportive environment at home.

How and Why Children Use Language Skills
Introduction to Literacy Development

Instructions: For each of the following reasons for using language, discuss and give examples of how children of different ages use listening, speaking, reading, and/or writing skills. Include additional reasons at the end of the handout if they come up in your discussions. An example is provided. You will have 15 minutes to complete this task.

To make a request:

Example:

An *infant* might raise her arms to be lifted
A *toddler* might point at a toy and say mine
A *preschooler* might say Can I have . . .

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

To complain about something:

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

To say hello or goodbye:

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

To respond to a communication:

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

To get information:

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

To think, plan, and solve problems:

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

To share feelings, ideas, and interests:

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

Add your own reasons here:

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

Learning Language and Loving It: A Guide to Promoting Children's Social and Language Development in Early Childhood Settings (Toronto: The Hanen Centre, 1992), 49–65. Retrieved on October 20, 2000 from the World Wide Web: http://www.hskids-tmsc.org/publications/tg_elit/appenc.htm

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How and Why Children Use Language Skills
Introduction to Literacy Development

Facilitator Directions:

- Introduce the activity by discussing the significance of this activity in relationship to literacy acquisition.
- Small Groups work on the activity as delineated below.
- Whole Group processing. It is recommended that you create charts that contain the information from all of the groups. You might ask one group to report on an area of discussion and others can add if they have something that is different.

Instructions: For each of the following reasons for using language, discuss and give examples of how children of different ages use listening, speaking, reading, and/or writing skills. Create a group list to share with the entire group. An example is provided. You will have 15 minutes to complete this task.

To make a request:
Example:
An *infant* might raise her arms to be lifted
A *toddler* might point at a toy and say mine
A *preschooler* might say Can I have . . .

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

To complain about something:

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

To say hello or goodbye:

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

To respond to a communication:

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

To get information:

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

To think, plan, and solve problems:

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

To share feelings, ideas, and interests:

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

Add your own reasons here:

- An infant might . . .
- A toddler might . . .
- A preschooler might . . .

Learning Language and Loving It: A Guide to Promoting Children's Social and Language Development in Early Childhood Settings (Toronto: The Hanen Centre, 1992), 49–65. Retrieved on November 2, 2000 from the World Wide Web: http://www.hskids-tmsc.org/publications/tg_elit/appenc.htm

Emerging Literacy: From Cooing to Conventional Reading and Writing*

Stage One	From Birth to about Three Months, Many Newborns:	Adults Can:
I communicate through reflexes.	• Communicate reflexively through crying and other actions • Cry in different ways, depending on what is needed (diaper change, food, company) • Appear startled by loud noises • Turn head toward familiar voices • Show a preference for human voices and music • Coo, gurgle, smile, and laugh to themselves • Coo and smile back and forth with adults • Smile upon hearing friendly voices • Listen and respond to sounds and voices • Start interactions with other people • Enjoy listening to a favorite person read aloud	• Respond as if babies know the effect of their sounds and actions • Smile and coo back at babies' smiles and coos to introduce the give and take of human communication • Smile with and talk to babies so they know they are loved • Recite rhymes and sing songs with babies • Read aloud to babies
Stage Two	**From about Three to Eight Months, Many Babies:**	**Adults Can:**
I discover that other people are interesting.	• Cry, make sounds, move their bodies, and use facial expressions to communicate (for example, wave their arms when excited) • May not know that they can send direct messages to other people • Understand nonverbal cues such as smiles even though they do not understand the meaning of spoken words • Smile and frown • Gurgle, growl, and squeal to themselves • Respond to simple, familiar requests and their own names • Respond to nonverbal cues such as pointing • Begin babbling at six or seven months • Repeat consonants and vowel sounds such as *mamama* • Produce all the sounds found in their home language • Use their senses to explore books • Listen to rhymes and songs	• Continue using any of the above strategies that are still appropriate for this age group • Interpret babies' communications and respond accordingly • Play games such as peek-a-boo and make sounds back and forth • Communicate with words and nonverbal cues (for example, point to the high chair and say, *Are you ready to eat?*) • Use babies' names when talking with them • Continue reading, talking, and singing with babies Provide cloth, soft vinyl, and/or cardboard books (expect that babies will put them in their mouths)

Stage Three	From about Eight to Thirteen Months, Many Babies:	Adults Can:
I use gestures to tell you many things.	• Understand that their sounds and actions cause others to respond • Use gestures--pointing, shaking their heads, and looking back and forth at another person--to ask questions, make requests, seek attention, say *hello*, and get someone to pay attention to the same thing they are looking at • Understand and respond to gestures, facial expressions, and changes in voice tone • Understand the meaning of a few words • Babble to themselves and other people • Produce long strings of sounds that sound like real words; use some sounds as if they were words • Imitate sounds made by other people • Take turns while talking, playing, and singing with another person • Use a finger and thumb to pick up objects; hold and use toys and objects such as rattles, spoons, and large crayons; and transfer objects from one hand to the other • Enjoy looking at books and listening to stories with adults • Turn pages in sturdy board, cloth, and vinyl books • Begin to understand that objects and events pictured in books are the same as those in their own world	• Continue using any of the above strategies that are still appropriate for this age group • Respond to babies' requests so they know they are loved and cared for • Talk to babies about what they seem to be saying--*Do you want to sit in my lap? Let me lift you up so we can cuddle together.* • Look at and name things with a baby (for example, hold a baby at the window to watch a truck go by) • Continue using speech and gestures when talking with children or giving simple directions (for example, *Now use the paper towel to wipe your other hand.*) • Sing songs and play games that involve taking turns and handing objects back and forth • Continue reading, talking, and singing with babies • Provide books with easy-to-turn pages (expect that babies will put them in their mouths.) • Introduce large crayons and paper and demonstrate how to use the crayons to make marks on paper • Name the objects babies point to--*That's a banana. Do you want some banana?*

Stage Four	From about Twelve to Eighteen Months, Many Toddlers:	Adults Can:
I begin to talk.	• Say a few words that refer to interesting people, things, and actions • Use the same word to mean different things by varying the tone of their voices and adding gestures • Point to pictures in books or to objects, upon request • Continue to babble while learning to speak • Use a single word to refer to a specific person or object (*bankie* means a blanket) or to refer to things with similar characteristics (*doggie* means all four-legged animals) • Understand and respond to their own name, a few familiar words, and simple requests • Repeat themselves or try a different approach if their communications do not get the desired response • Like books about familiar objects, animals, people, and events • Jump up to get an object like the one pictured in a book • Enjoy bedtime reading sessions • Scribble with crayons and markers	• Continue using any of the above strategies that are still appropriate for this age group • Show excitement when toddlers learn new words • Continue providing the names for objects and actions • Respond to a toddler's one-word communication by stating it as a full sentence (for example, a child says, *Mama* while pointing at the door and tilting her head to one side. Her teacher responds, *That's right. Your mama went to class. She'll be back soon.*) • Congratulate toddlers when they follow directions--*Thank you for handing me the diaper.* • Pay attention to toddlers to learn what they are trying to say (Be patient. It may take time to understand their communications.) • Continue reading, talking, and singing with toddlers

*Based in part on K. Eileen Allen and Lynn Marotz, *Developmental Profiles: Pre-birth through Eight* (Albany, NY: Delmar Publishers, 1994), 39, 55–57, 63–64, 73–74, 80–81, 91–94, 99–102, 108–110, and Elaine Weitzman, *Learning Language and Loving It: A Guide to Promoting Children's Social and Language Development in Early Childhood Settings* (Toronto: The Hanen Centre, 1992), 49–65. Retrieved on November 2, 2000 from the World Wide Web: http://www.hskids-tmsc.org/publications/tg_elit/appenc.htm

Reading With Young Children Quiz

Facilitator Directions:

1. Distribute Quiz & invite participants to take it.
2. Invite participants to discuss quiz in small groups focusing on points of significance to the each small group.
3. Facilitate a whole group discussion developing the points below.
4. Following this discussion, participants will move to practicing effective" Reading Aloud" strategies & discussing elements of Great Children's Books.

Discussion: Points to be elicited from Participants

Show your love of reading! Reading with your child should be enjoyable for both of you. And, although you are inviting your child to experience the joy of reading, there are a few things that you can do in order to help your child come to understand the reading process.

- First, allow your child to select the book even if you know that you'll be reading the same book the fifth time this week. Choice is very empowering and it shows your child that you value her choices.
- Stop for discussion of interesting details as you read. As you read with your child, stop frequently to discuss the language, pictures and story.
- It's fun to ham it up! Use different voices; make sound effects and be silly. This will demonstrate your enjoyment of reading!
- Discuss any similarities between the story, the characters or setting and real life.
- Discuss the meaning of new words. Use them in other sentences and compare and contrast what they mean with words that have similar meanings and which your child knows.
- And, be sure to revisit the new words and concepts later, when the book has been put away.

Reading With Young Children

Check your opinion!

1. Young children get bored if they hear the same story again and again.
   _____ Agree _____ Disagree
2. It is best to save reading to children for when they know how to sit and listen quietly to a story.
   _____ Agree _____ Disagree
3. I would describe my child's feelings about reading as
   _____ No interest _____ A little interest _____ Likes it _____ Loves it

(Things that can happen while I am reading to my child.)

4. I talk about different parts of the book (cover, "About the Author" page, title, etc.).
   never sometimes always

5. I ask questions or make comments about the story to keep my child's attention.
   never sometimes always

6. I encourage my child to join in to talk about the pictures.
   never sometimes always

7. My child does not pay attention when I read to him or her, so I don't usually bother to finish the story.
   never sometimes always

8. I tell my child my own feelings about a story we have read.
   never sometimes always

9. I let my child choose the book we'll read.
   never sometimes always

10. I let my child hold the book and turn pages.
    never sometimes always

11. I praise my child for spending time reading together.
    never sometimes always

12. We take turns reading the book.
    never sometimes always

13. I act out the story, use different voices for different characters, or make sound effects.
    never sometimes always

14. I keep reading, even after my child loses interest.
    never sometimes always

15. I point to pictures, label the pictures, and encourage a response.
    never sometimes always

(Thomas, A., Fazio, L. & Stiefelmeyer. (1999). Families at School: A Guide for Educators. IRA)

Sharing A Children's Book

Part I The Shared Reading Experience at Home

Instructions: Participants will have 45 minutes to complete Part I and Part II. Take turns sharing a children's book with other members of your group. Follow these steps, as if you were introducing the book to your child:

- Before Reading
  - First, flip through the book, look at the pictures and talk about the story before you and/or your child begins reading
  - Discuss the author and/or illustrator.
  - Show the cover and point out details in the illustration.
  - Read the title aloud.
  - Talk about what kind of book it is. For example:
    This is a story about a mommy and her child, just like us. Mama, Do You Love Me? by Barbara Joosse
    This is a story of a little cloud that changes shapes. What do you see when you look at a could? Little Cloud by Eric Carle
    This story is about some animals that are hiding and we have to find them. Find Me a Tiger by Lynley Dodd
  - Discuss what you think the book is going to be about.
  - Suggest things to look and listen for while paying attention to the story.
  - Show a few pages and ask, What do you think will happen in this book?

- During Reading
  - Invite your child to join you in the reading.
  - Point to each word as you read.
  - Stop to discuss what has happened thus far and make more predictions.

- After Reading Discussion (PEER & Questioning)
  P Parent starts a discussion about the book,
  E Evaluates the child's response,
  E Expands the child's response, and
  R Repeats the initial question to check that the child understands the new learning.

Part II.

What Do These Books Have in Common? How Is Each One Unique?

Instructions: Identify the things that some of the shared books have in common (for example, words and phrases are repeated) and what makes each book unique (for example, one book is about a concept-size). Record your findings on chart paper and prepare to present them to the full group.

PEER

The PEER sequence for discussing books. In PEER:

- **P** Parent starts a discussion about the book,
- **E** Evaluates the child's response,
- **E** Expands the child's response, and
- **R** Repeats the initial question to check that child understands the new learning.

For example, reading A Mother for Choco (Burns,

Griffin and Snow, 1999):

Parent: "What is Mrs. Bear doing?"
Child: "Standing on her toes."
Parent: "Yes, she's standing on her toes and picking apples." (Evaluates and expands)
Parent: (Reading book next time): "What is Mrs. Bear doing? Do you remember?"
Child: "She's standing on her toes and picking apples."
Parent: "That's right, and she's putting them in her basket." (Evaluates and expands)

Open-Ended Questions for Reading Aloud
Facilitating a Rich Discussion

Discussion of stories is critical but a word of caution! This is a very long list of questions and it's important to remember that one shouldn't ask all the questions every time! That is bound to kill the love of reading.

Open -Ended Questions
When reading a story aloud, stop to ask open-ended questions that encourage children to talk about the book and to focus on the details in the story. You will notice that there is no right or wrong way to answer questions such as the ones listed below; therefore, these questions let children participate in the story, express their ideas and feelings, think critically, and use their imaginations in a safe manner. Children also gain confidence in their thinking abilities because their views are accepted.

1. *What do you think may happen next in the story?*
    1. *What would you do if you were . . . ?*
    2. *What did you like about the story?*
    3. *What will you tell Daddy or Mommy about the story?*
    4. *What made you feel happy, sad, surprised, scared?*
    5. *What do you think you will remember about the story tomorrow?*
    6. *What ending would you make up for the story?*
    7. *What is happening on this page?*
    8. *What new words did you hear or learn?*

Completion Questions
Completion questions encourage the child to fill in a blank by returning to the language structure of the book. For example, "Little cloud often saw airplanes _____ through the clouds."

Recall Questions
Recall questions help children remember the facts of the story. For example, "Do you remember how the book began?"

Vocabulary Development Questions
Vocabulary questions help children examine new words closely. For example, "Little cloud loved to watch rabbits dash across the meadows." Can you *dash* across the room?

Critical Response Questions
Critical response questions help a child create a connection between the story and their won lives. "Have you ever looked up at clouds? What did you see?" "If you could change into something else, what might it be?"

---

*Adapted from Burns, S., Griffin, P. & Snow E. (Eds.). (1999) Starting Out Right: A Guide to Promoting Children's Reading Success. Washington, DC: National Academy Press

Supporting Independent Writing: Help Your Child Learn to Write Well

Should you help your child with writing?

Yes, if you want your child to:

- Do well in school
- Enjoy self-expression
- Become more self-reliant

Supporting Independent Writing
Help Your Child Learn to Write Well

Writing is:

Practical

Job-Related

Stimulating

Social

Therapeutic

Supporting Independent Writing
Help Your Child Learn to Write Well

Writing is:

Practical.

Most of us make lists, jot down reminders, and write notes and instructions at least occasionally.

Job-Related.

Professional and white-collar workers write frequently--preparing memos, letters, briefing papers, sales reports, articles, research reports, proposals, and the like. Most workers do "some" writing on the job.

Stimulating.

Writing helps to provoke thoughts and to organize them logically and concisely.

Social.

Most of us write thank-you notes and letters to friends at least now and then.

Therapeutic.

It can be helpful to express feelings in writing that cannot be expressed so easily by speaking.

Unfortunately, "many schools are unable to give children sufficient instruction in writing" Therefore, a parent, can make a big difference. You can use helping strategies that are simple and fun. You can use them to help your child learn to write well--and to enjoy doing it!

Supporting Independent Writing
Help Your Child Learn to Write Well

Things to Know

Writing well requires:

- **Clear thinking**
- **Sufficient time**
  - **Reading**
- **A Meaningful Task**
  - **Interest**
  - **Practice**
  - **Revising**

Supporting Independent Writing Help Your Child Learn to Write Well

Things to Know

Most children's basic speech patterns are formed by the time they enter school. By that time children speak clearly, recognize most letters of the alphabet, and may try to write. Show an interest in, and ask questions about, the things your child says, draws, and may try to write.

Writing well requires:

- **Clear thinking.**
  Sometimes the child needs to have his/her memory refreshed about a past event in order to write about it.

- **Sufficient time**.
  Children may have 'stories in their heads' but need time to think them through and write them down. School class periods are often not long enough.

- **Reading**.
  Reading can stimulate a child to write about his/her own family or school life. If your child reads good books, (s)he will be a better writer.

- **A Meaningful Task.**
  A child needs meaningful, not artificial writing tasks. You'll find suggestions for such tasks in the section, "Things To Do."

- **Interest.**
  All the time in the world won't help if there is nothing to write, nothing to say. Some of the reasons for writing include: sending messages, keeping records, expressing feelings, or relaying information.

- **Practice.**
  And more practice.

- **Revising.**
  Students need experience in revising their work. Revision means seeing what can be made it clearer, more descriptive, more concise or more organized.

Supporting Independent Writing
Help Your Child Learn to Write Well

Pointers for Parents

- **Provide a place**

- **Have the materials**

- **Allow time**

- **Respond**

- **Don't you write it!**

- **Praise.**

Supporting Independent Writing
Help Your Child Learn to Write Well

Pointers for Parents

- **Provide a place**
  It's important for a child to have a good place to write--a desk or table with a smooth, flat surface and good lighting.

- **Have the materials**
  Provide plenty of paper--lined and unlined--and things to write with, including pencils, pens, and crayons.

- **Allow time**
  Help your child spend time thinking about a writing project or exercise. Good writers do a great deal of thinking. Your child may dawdle, sharpen a pencil, get papers ready, or look up the spelling of a word. Be patient--your child may be thinking.

- **Respond**
  Do respond to the ideas your child expresses verbally or in writing. Make it clear that you are interested in the true function of writing which is to convey ideas. This means focusing on "what" the child has written, not "how" it was written. It's usually wise to ignore minor errors, particularly at the stage when your child is just getting ideas together.

- **Don't you write it!**
  Don't write a paper for your child that will be turned in as his/her work. Never rewrite a child's work. Meeting a writing deadline, taking responsibility for the finished product, and feeling ownership of it are important parts of writing well.

- **Praise.**
  Take a positive approach and say something good about your child's writing. Is it accurate? Descriptive? Thoughtful? Interesting? Does it say something?

Supporting Independent Writing
Help Your Child Learn to Write Well

Things to Do

- **Make it real**
- **Suggest note-taking**
- **Brainstorm**
- **Encourage keeping a journal**
- **Write together**
- **Use games**
- **Suggest making lists**
- **Encourage copying**

Help Your Child Learn to Write Well. (1993). U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement. Retrieved November 1, 2000 from the World Wide Web: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/Writing/

Supporting Independent Writing
Help Your Child Learn to Write Well

Things to Do

- **Make it real**

Your child needs to do real writing. It's more important for the child to write a letter to a relative than it is to write a one-line note on a greeting card. Encourage the child to write to relatives and friends. Perhaps your child would enjoy corresponding with a pen pal.

- **Suggest note-taking**

Encourage your child to take notes on trips or outings and to describe what (s)he saw. This could include a description of nature walks, a boat ride, a car trip, or other events that lend themselves to note taking.

- **Brainstorm**

Talk with your child as much as possible about his/her impressions and encourage the child to describe people and events to you. If the child's description is especially accurate and colorful, say so.

- **Encourage keeping a journal**

This is excellent writing practice as well as a good outlet for venting feelings. Encourage your child to write about things that happen at home and school, about people (s)he likes or dislikes and why, things to remember or things the child wants to do. Especially encourage your child to write about personal feelings--pleasures as well as disappointments. If the child wants to share the journal with you, read the entries and discuss them--especially the child's ideas and perceptions.

- **Write together**

Have your child help you with letters, even such routine ones as ordering items from an advertisement or writing to a business firm. This helps the child to see firsthand that writing is important to adults and truly useful.

- **Use games**

There are numerous games and puzzles that help a child to increase vocabulary and make the child more fluent in speaking and writing. Remember, building a vocabulary builds confidence. Try crossword puzzles, word games, anagrams and cryptograms designed especially for children. Flash cards are good, too, and they're easy to make at home.

- **Suggest making lists**

Most children like to make lists just as they like to count. Encourage this. Making lists is good practice and helps a child to become more organized. Boys and girls might make lists of their records, tapes, baseball cards, dolls, furniture in a room, etc. They could include items they want. It's also good practice to make lists of things to do, schoolwork, dates for tests, social events, and other reminders.

- **Encourage copying**

If a child likes a particular song, suggest learning the words by writing them down--replaying the song on your stereo/tape player or jotting down the words whenever the song is played on a radio program. Also encourage copying favorite poems or quotations from books and plays.

Help Your Child Learn to Write Well. (1993). U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement. Retrieved November 1, 2000 from the World Wide Web: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/Writing/

Think - Feel - Act
Parent Empowerment to Build Children's Literacy Skills
Evaluation
Regina G. Chatel, Ph.D., 2000

Please circle your identification: parent, volunteer parent trainer, kindergarten teacher, Reading Consultant, community child-care provider.

Session: _____Introduction of Program
_____Volunteer parent training Workshop
_____Parent Reading Workshop
_____Parent Writing Workshop
_____Parent Community Resources Workshop
_____Community Outreach Program

	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
1. The learning objectives were clearly stated.			
2. The presentation was consistent with the objectives.			
3. I was able to achieve the learning objectives.			
4. The program is appropriate for the students at my child(ren).			
5. I feel I can implement the program.			
6. The setting was conducive to learning.			
What did you like the best about this program?			
What would you suggest to improve the training?			
What additional training would you like?			

An idea I had...

A feeling I experienced....

A step I will take...

Parent Empowerment to Build Children's Literacy Skills

Regina G. Chatel
Paula Talty, Editors

Further information!!!!

Reading With Young Children: It's Never Too Early

It's never too early to start building a literacy foundation!

From birth to age 5, children's brains develop and make new connections very rapidly. These connections shape their capacities for future learning. Parents and caregivers can support brain development by creating a rich literacy environment. Here are some suggestions:

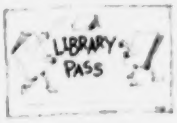
- **0-3 months**
  - Hold the baby often and make eye contact. My dear friend, Dr. Lois Davis claims that literacy development begins at birth when the Mother and child lock gazes! I have always maintained that this is only due to the fact that the baby is hungry ☺ but I recommend that parents talk, sing, and recite nursery rhymes.
  - It's not too early to read to the child while feeding!
  - Establish the bedtime reading routine! It's not to early to establish the ritual of reading a bedtime story. Although bedtime is a fluid concept at this stage, you will be building the foundation for a life long love of reading.
- **3-12 months**
  - Read to your baby at least five minutes each day and gradually increase the time.
  - Talk to your baby about what you are doing as you go about your day. Even if your child can't talk to you, you are building her knowledge of oral language.

- Let the baby feel different textures especially with a wonderful book such as Pat the Bunny!
- Play peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake, and other finger games.
- Make reading material readily accessible to your child by placing cloth and plastic books within the child's reach. It's important to have books in every room of your home.
- Continue the bedtime reading routine!

- **1-2 years old**
  - Increase reading time to 15 minutes as your child's attention span increases.
  - Use your child's name frequently and play rhyming games with it.
  - Talk about what you and your child are doing and respond to your child's efforts to understand and communicate.
  - Point to people, animals, and objects and say their names.
  - Continue the bedtime reading routine and be sure to allow your child select the book! It's fine to read favorite stories over and over. Children love repetition even if you don't! And, they learn from it.

- **2-3 years old**

  - Ask the child to name the pictures in books.
  - Give the child large non-toxic crayons and paper.
  - Play pretend games with props.
  - Continue the bedtime reading routine letting your child select the book!

- **3-5 years old**
  - Taking the cue from your child, increase reading time.
  - Visit the library with your child.
  - Play rhyming games and "what if" 

games.
  - Play simple board games and matching games; *Concentration* was a favorite in our home.
  - Teach your child his or her complete name, address, and phone number.
  - Be a literacy model and let your child catch you reading newspapers, magazines, books, and children's books.
  - Continue the bedtime reading routine letting your child select the book!

A central goal during these preschool years is to enhance children's **exposure to concepts about print.** Concepts about print include the fact that the words, rather than pictures, carry the meaning of a story, that the strings of letters between spaces are words and in print correspond to an oral version, and that reading progresses from left to right and top to bottom. While reading stories, parents may demonstrate these features by pointing to individual words, pointing out that we read from left to right, directing children's attention to where to begin reading, and helping children to recognize letter shapes and sounds. Some researchers have suggested that the key to the development of literacy concepts may be these parental demonstrations of how print works during these joyful reading sessions.

Reading With Young Children: Parent Quiz

(Thomas, A., Fazio, L. & Stiefelmeyer. (1999). Families at School: A Guide for Educators. Newark, DE: IRA)

Check your opinion!

16. Young children get bored if they hear the same story again and again.
_____ Agree _____ Disagree

17. It is best to save reading to children for when they know how to sit and listen quietly to a story.
_____ Agree _____ Disagree

18. I would describe my child's feelings about reading as
_____ No interest _____ A little interest _____ Likes it _____ Loves it

19. I talk about different parts of the book (cover, "About the Author" page, title, etc.).
never sometimes always

20. I ask questions or make comments about the story to keep my child's attention.
never sometimes always

21. I encourage my child to join in to talk about the pictures.
never sometimes always

22. When my child does not pay attention when I read to her I don't finish the story.
never sometimes always

23. I tell my child my own feelings about a story we have read.
never sometimes always

24. I let my child choose the book we'll read.
never sometimes always

25. I let my child hold the book and turn pages.
never sometimes always

26. I praise my child for spending time reading together.
never sometimes always

27. We take turns reading the book.
never sometimes always

28. I act out the story, use different voices for different characters, or make sound effects.
never sometimes always

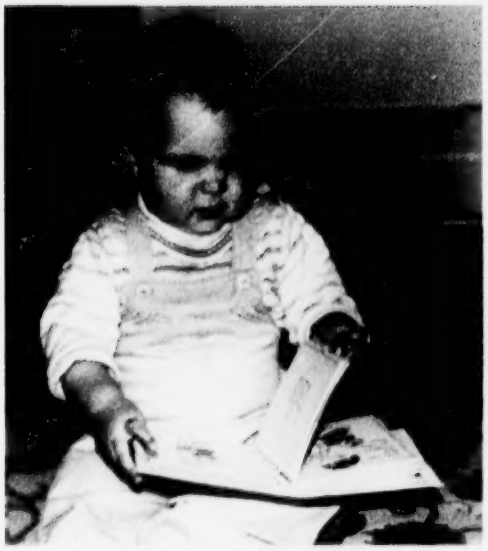
29. I keep reading, even after my child loses interest.
never sometimes always

30. I point to pictures, label the pictures, and encourage a response.
never sometimes always

Reading With Young Children Quiz: Discussion

Show your love of reading! Reading with your child should be enjoyable for both of you. And, although you are inviting your child to experience the joy of reading, there are a few things that you can do in order to help your child come to understand the reading process. First, allow your child to select the book even if you know that you'll be reading the same book the fifth time this week. Choice is very empowering and it shows your child that you value her choices. Stop for discussion of interesting details as you read. As you read with your child, stop frequently to discuss the language, pictures and story. It's fun to ham it up! Use different voices; make sound effects and be silly. This will demonstrate your enjoyment of reading! Discuss any similarities between the story, the characters or setting and real life. Discuss the meaning of new words. Use them in other sentences and compare and contrast what they mean with words that have similar meanings and which your child knows. And, be sure to revisit the new words and concepts later, when the book has been put away.

However, the most important thing is to Read, Read, and Continue Reading!



2. Developing Awareness of Printed Language

The first step to becoming a successful reader is developing an awareness of print! Research (Slivern & Silvern, 1990; Thomas, Fazio, & Stiefelmeyer,1999) shows that the foundation of literacy is an understanding, appreciation and love of books which is developed in the first years of life. Parents teach children about literacy through talking, playing and sharing literacy experiences with their children.

Emergent literacy skills are developed as parents read aloud to a child. The child begins to learn concepts about books which proficient readers take for granted. While cuddled with Daddy and a favorite book, the child hears the terms *author* and *illustrator*, sees the left-to-right progression as the book is being read, hears the change in voice when there is an exclamation point rather than a period. The child begins to understand the concepts of word, punctuation, beginning and ending, front and back, and that the pictures help tell the story but it is the words that are read.

When engaged in oral reading, parents are actually teaching their children about books but usually in an indirect manner. The very act of reading provides children with an oral model of written language and demonstrates concepts about books that adults know intuitively. For example, when reading aloud, parents should let the child open the book and turn the pages since this shows the child that books are read from front to back. Pointing to the words as you read demonstrates the idea that what is said is what is read.

Drawing attention to repeated phrases and inviting the child to join in each time they occur helps develop a sense of book - like language. Pointing out letters and words that you see in daily life develops the idea that literacy surrounds us. Reading aloud traffic signs, billboards, notices, labels on package, and phone numbers shows a child how printed words relate to daily living both at home, while traveling to and from home, at the grocery store and everywhere else. It's not unusual to see children read signs in their environment before they start reading books!

Although most parents are not trained educators, they do know much about literacy development from observing and interacting with their own children. First, we know that all children are curious and can learn from birth. For example, have you tried to pass a McDonald's or turn two pages at the same time in a favorite bedtime story only to have your child yell, "But Daddy, you missed..." !!! Babies are surrounded by language that they are expected to learn without formal parental instruction.

Also, children learn naturally by talking and doing in a social context. When my daughter, Viesha, was four years old, she became exasperated with me and said, "Mommy, you're 'beenoxious'!" She didn't have to repeat the word ten times and use it in a sentence before trying it out on me! When David, her daddy, told her that he could not carry her up the driveway because she was too heavy, she told him that he had to "persevere." Children learn from people that they cherish and admire. Parents, siblings, grandparents, and caregivers facilitate literacy by talking and engaging children in meaningful discussions and activities.

Finally, learning must be functional, meaningful, interesting, and whole. Although I believe this, I must admit I did buy my daughter many colorful workbooks that required

her to circle letters, color in predefined lines, and practice correct letter formation. But all Viesha did was create beautiful scribbles! When she wanted to read a book, she chose stories such as The Pokey Little Puppy, Cat in the Hat, and The Saggy, Baggy Elephant, not the colorful drill books! Her choices were driven by the joy and meaning of reading not the abstract study of its orthography! She could not fall asleep without a comforting bedtime story. And today, she's eighteen and she still reads each night before going to sleep.

Suggested Activities with Preschoolers:

- Help your child find the initial letter of his/her own name in environmental signs. You'll discover how delighted your child will be with finding their own special letter in signs and labels all around them.
- Write and display your child's name frequently and on everything! They will soon recognize it without too much assistance from you. As time goes on, help your child identify high frequency words such as, "stop," "mom," "dad," "go."
- Remember that TV isn't all bad! You can watch some wonderful children's programs together. Sesame Street will help **you** and your child learn the alphabet song.
- Be sure to talk with your child not just question her. Talking is a precursor to reading and writing. You will be helping your child build a vocabulary which is essential to success in reading. Demonstrate to your child your love of words! For adults, a few minutes of conversation are a luxury but for our children it is a necessity.

3. Practice Reflective Reading: Reading With Young Children

Burns, Griffin and Snow (1999) extol parents and (grandparents) to look for your child's brilliance! I would like to suggest that parents help children discover the brilliance within them.

We can cultivate this brilliance by the way we read with our children. While reading to children is important, it is also important to discuss the books with our children. Burns, Griffin and Snow (1999) recommend that we be systematic in the way we discuss books with children in terms of the sequence of the discussion and the nature of the questions or discussion prompts we use.

First, flip through the book and look at the pictures and talk about the story before you or your child begins reading. I'm certain that you as an adult reader preview your books in the same way. Think about how you read the newspaper. You don't just start at the beginning and read until you read the last word on the last page! You make some decisions on what you are reading first based on what you anticipate the story will be about. You prepare mentally for the story. So too with a child, ask your child to tell what he thinks the story will be about. This process of prediction helps the child prepare mentally for the story. If your child asks you for help with a word, start by giving her a clue before you give her the answer. We all want to help our children and don't want to see our children frustrate or angry. But do help rather than give! Children need lots of

support, encouragement, and practice in order to become independent readers. Besides, asking for help is a very good strategy!

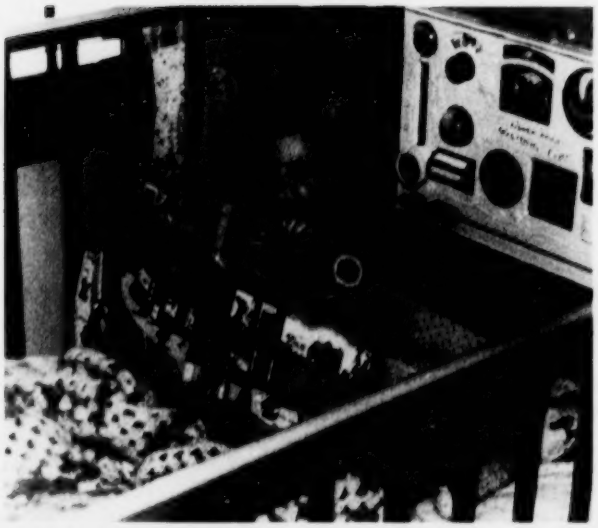
Expect, accept and praise good guesses or approximations. When your child makes guesses, or approximations, while reading, he is telling you that he is paying attention to the meaning. Substituting the word "puppy" for "dog" may mean that your child is paying attention to the meaning of the story and using clues in the pictures. This is a very effective strategy. Substituting the word "dig" for "dog" may mean that your child is paying attention to the letters in the word and not the meaning. This is also a good strategy. But in this case you might ask your child, "Does that make sense?" after the child has done reading. Don't be tempted to correct all errors. Give your child a chance to self-correct. You want to make sure your child is using a variety of strategies.

Back to Burns, Griffin and Snow (1999). They recommend the PEER sequence for discussing books. In PEER:

P Parent starts a discussion about the book,
E Evaluates the child's response,
E Expands the child's response, and
R Repeats the initial question to check that the child understands the new learning.

For example, reading A Mother for Choco (Burns, Griffin and Snow, 1999):

Parent: "What is Mrs. Bear doing?"
Child: "Standing on her toes."
Parent: "Yes, she's standing on her toes and picking apples." (Evaluates and expands)
Parent: (Reading book next time): "What is Mrs. Bear doing? Do you remember?"
Child: "She's standing on her toes and picking apples."
Parent: "That's right, and she's putting them in her basket." (Evaluates and expands)



4. Developing Phonological Awareness: Play with Language

Reading doesn't start with learning the alphabet. It starts with listening and learning how to distinguish the individual sounds of speech. Very young children hear spoken language as a rush of sounds, much the way an adult hears a foreign language. With exposure, most children spontaneously develop "phonemic awareness," the ability to discern individual words and then specific sounds within those words.

Children must become aware of the sounds of spoken words in addition to knowing their meaning. This awareness of sounds is called phonemic awareness. Children show phonological awareness when they sing rhyming songs, enjoy and recite poems, create rhymes, create silly words by substituting one sound for another. Although young children don't necessarily realize that what they are doing is demonstrating phonemic awareness, research suggests that they must be aware of sounds in words. Phonemic awareness is learned through oral activities and play with language.

Phonemic awareness is the understanding that spoken words and syllables are themselves made up of sequences of elementary speech sounds. This understanding is essential for learning to read an alphabetic language because it is these elementary sounds or phonemes that letters represent. Without phonemic awareness, phonics can make no

sense, and the spellings of words can be learned only by rote.

Suggested activities:

- Read, sing, and recite nursery rhymes and rhyming songs. Children who are familiar with nursery rhymes can build on them by adding new words and rhymes. When reciting nursery rhymes, children can clap, tap their feet, or jump each time they hear a word that sounds like another word. Incorporate puppets and finger plays into playful rhyming games.

Teddy bear, Teddy bear Written By: Unknown Copyright Unknown Teddy bear, Teddy bear Touch the ground. Teddy bear, Teddy bear, Turn around. Teddy bear, Teddy bear, Show your shoe. Teddy bear, Teddy bear, That will do. Teddy bear, Teddy bear, Run upstairs. Teddy bear, Teddy bear, Say your prayers. Teddy bear, Teddy bear, Blow out the light. Teddy bear, Teddy bear, Say good night.	**Apples and Bananas** Written By: Unknown Copyright Unknown I like to eat, eat, eat apples and bananas I like to eat, eat, eat apples and bananas I like to ate, ate, ate ay-ples and ba-nay-nays I like to ate, ate, ate ay-ples and ba-nay-nays I like to eat, eat, eat ee-ples and bee-nee-nees I like to eat, eat, eat ee-ples and bee-nee-nees I like to ite, ite, ite i-ples and by-ny-nys I like to ite, ite, ite i-ples and by-ny-nys I like to ote, ote, ote oh-ples and bo-no-nos I like to ote, ote, ote oh-ples and bo-no-nos I like to oot, oot, oot oo-ples and boo-noo-noos I like to oot, oot, oot oo-ples and boo-noo-noos

- Play rhyming games. Start by comparing two words that rhyme (e.g. "sat", "mat"). When children understand the concept of rhyme, ask them to produce real or made-up words that rhyme with a target word (e.g. given "lake", a child might produce "make" or "pake"). Ask children, "Do 'bat' and 'sit' rhyme?" and see if they can identify words

that do rhyme with "bat." Don't be concerned with spelling because the children are matching sounds: "wait" and "late" are perfectly good rhyming words

- Ask questions as you read about the pictures, the story, and the words. "Show me the cow." "Where is the boy's knee?" "Can you find the letter "c"?" Sound out letters and talk about the story, making predictions about what will happen next. In the beginning include books that feature repetition, rhyming books, and books such as those written by Dr. Seuss and others:

  Cameron, Polly, "I Can't" said the ant
  Hoberman, Mary Ann, A House Is a House for Me
  Martin, Jr., Bill and Archambault, J., Chicka Chicka Boom Boom
  Martin, Jr., Bill and Archambault, J., Listen to the Rain
  Seuss, Dr. ABC
  Seuss, Dr. Fox in Socks
  Seuss, Dr. Green Eggs and Ham
  Seuss, Dr. The Cat in the Hat

- Make language playful. While you're preparing a meal, driving, or cleaning, play a game about sounds. A simple starter is "I spy with my little eye something you don't see. And it starts with the letter T." Your child guesses what you see and takes the next turn.

5. Learning the Alphabet and Letter Sounds

The recognition and naming of letters is one important aspect of reading. This does not mean, however, that parents need to wait until a child knows the names of all letters before helping a child sound out or play with words. The ability to recognize and name letters and associate a sound with a letter or set of letters can develop together.

Suggested Activities:

- Read, read and read picture books with your child.
- Walk and talk with children about what you see in your neighborhood.
- Identify basic shapes in your home like the rectangle (table).
- Play simple card games and board games with an emphasis on enjoyment and being together as a family not "winning."
- Provide many opportunities to draw and write and be sure to display the work in a prominent place in your home. After all, what's the refrigerator for, if not to be used as a bulletin board!
- Play alphabet games. Sing the alphabet song to help your child learn letters as you play with alphabet books, blocks, and magnetic letters. Recite letters as you go up and down stairs or give pushes on a swing. Games, puzzles, books on tape, and A-B-C, dot-to-dot, and letter-play books are available at most toy stores. Many engaging computer games designed for teaching children letters are also available.
- Sound out letters. Point out other words that begin with the same letter as your child's name, drawing attention to similarities of the beginning sound.
- Use alphabet books, computer games, or car games such as "I'm thinking of something that starts with /b/" to engage the child in alliterative and letter-sound play.

If you have a book that lends itself to alliteration and rhyme, such as a Dr. Suess book, sound out rhyming words as you read or challenge the child to do so for you.

- Play word games that connect sounds with syllables and words. For example, if this spells "mat," how do you spell "bat"?
- Make large letters on sheets of paper and have your child trace these with his finger. Cut out letters from sandpaper. Have him trace these. Encourage scribble "writing."
- Ask your child to point out words that begin with the first letter of his/her name.

- If your child needs to learn most of the alphabet letter sounds, help her create her own Alphabet Book. Staple some pieces of paper together and ask your child to draw pictures of items that begin with the sound of each alphabet letter
- You can also teach alphabet letters and letter sounds by using an Alphabet Chart with pictures. Be sure to point to each letter as you are saying the letter name and letter sound. If you review the alphabet chart frequently, pretty soon your child will be able to point to each letter and say the sounds himself!

Suggested Materials

- Cardboard and Cloth Books - Alphabet, Counting, Numbers
- Magnetic Letters, Chalk Boards and Chalk
- Sidewalk Chalk, Washable Crayons, Washable Markers
- Water Colors/Water Based Washable Paints
- Simple Child's Cardboard and Cloth Books
- Plastic Washable books

Down By the Sea

Down by the sea
I found your hidden treasure
Just you and me,
We overdosed on pleasure

Yonnies in the wind,
We're ruggin' up for winter
Putting out the bins
In cold and windy weather

Down by the docks
Live all the silent sea-ships
Crates are stored on blocks
Where now only the rats live

Sail me down the river
Till we reach the shore
Diving into the center
Eating out the core

Down on the beach
Saluting Captain Benbow
Always out of reach
It's quiet when the tide's low

Climbing up the cliffs
You can see for miles far
The boat that ran adrift
Is sitting on the sandbar

Laughing at the waves
That storm the river mouth
The ice is on the move now
Creeping north and south

Down by the sea
I found your hidden treasure
Just you and me
We over-dosed on pleasure

Listen to your heart
Screamin' at the sky
Can't you feel it tremble?
Don't you wonder why?

6. Letters and Words

Children need to understand the idea that words are made of letters and that there is a system and an order to the way letters are placed together to create words. This abstract concept is easily taught through a variety of simple activities at home. Ultimately, this emphasis on letters and words serves as only one part of reading. And, parents must always remember that the only reason for doing these activities is to help children create meaning from what they are reading.

Suggested Activities:

- Teach your child to spell a few special words, such as his/her name, "stop", or "exit." Draw attention to these and other high frequency words as you read books with your child. Invite your child to read these words as they appear or to look for them.
- Play word-building games with letter tiles such as Scrabble or magnetic letters (use that

This Old Man

This old man, he played one
He played knick-knack on my thumb
Knick-knack paddywhack, give your dog a bone
This old man came rolling home

This old man, he played two
He played knick-knack on my shoe
Chorus

This old man, he played three
He played knick-knack on my knee
Chorus

This old man, he played four
He played knick-knack on my door
Chorus

This old man, he played five
He played knick-knack on my hive
Chorus

This old man, he played six
He played knick-knack on my sticks
Chorus

This old man, he played seven
He played knick-knack up in heaven
Chorus

This old man, he played eight
He played knick-knack on my gate
Chorus

This old man, he played nine
He played knick-knack on my spine
Chorus

This old man, he played ten
He played knick-knack once again
Knick-knack paddywhack, give your dog a bone
This old man came rolling home

refrigerator door). Ask your child to build strings of letters for you to read.

- Sing songs and read rhyming books. Sing the alphabet with your child, and teach your child songs that emphasize rhyme and alliteration, such as "this Old Man" and "Down by the Sea." Emphasize the sounds as you sing. Play rhyming games and clap out names. Jumble the wording or word order of familiar poems and challenge your child to detect the error.
- Play word games. Invite your child to identify and play with words. For example, ask your child to think of words that rhyme with "bat" or begin with /m/. What would be left if you took the /k/ sound out

of "cat"? What would you have if you put these sounds together: /p/ and ickle; /m/ and ilk; and /s/,/a/,and /t/. Which of these words starts with a different sound-"bag," "candy," "bike"? Do "boat" and "baby" start with the same sound?

- Point out new words. As you encounter them, say the sound while touching each letter in a new word. For example, say "s-u-n" and then blend sounds to create the words. In practicing new words, be sure to connect to words with common sounds and spellings that your child knows, like "fun" or "sat" instead of "night" or "saw."
- Play spelling games with your older children. After your child begins pronouncing words, encourage spelling by saying each sound in the words and then writing the letter that goes with the sound. Be careful not to make this a chore.
- Parents can help children learn a little bit about words at home by playing with words in a sentence that is meaningful for the child. For example, if you are rereading a familiar story, you might ask the child to pick out several words that begin with the same sound as *toy*. In this way the child is asked to match the beginning sounds of familiar words, rather than to isolate the sound of "t."
- This same technique can be used with ending sounds as well. Reading poetry out loud to children is one of the best ways to help them become aware of matching sounds in words.

AND OTHER NONSENSE!
http://web.aimnet.com/~veeceet/kids/worse.html

I eat my peas with honey,
I've done it all my life:
It makes them taste quite funny,
But it keeps them on the knife.
As I was coming down the stair
I met a man who wasn't there:
He wasn't there again to-day:
I *wish* that man would go away.

7. Reread Familiar Books: Developing Accuracy and Fluency

Do you enjoy listening to your favorite CDs over and over and over again!!! Well, your child enjoys reading and rereading favorite books from her "baby" years. Although you may get tired of reading the same books for the umpteenth time, when you do reread such favorite books you are reinforcing the idea that you value reading. In addition, this practice helps your child develop reading accuracy and fluency.

Don't put away those picture books rather, encourage your children to read easy, enjoyable stories as often as possible. It is likely that your child will enjoy reading and learn more from reading if you sit together, taking turns reading and encouraging discussion. You can build in success by inviting your child to read-well known books. Only later and gradually, as your child becomes able, take turns with sentences, paragraphs, and pages.

If your child experienced some difficulty with some of the words, wait until you finish the story. Then revisit those words that cause trouble. Rereading the entire story over and over several days, and again weeks later, is a powerful way to reinforce this learning. Remember that the goal of reading is meaning not just sounding out the words. Therefore, don't interrupt the meaning by making your child sound out all the words perfectly...remember to think of these efforts as risk-taking and approximations rather than mistakes!

Children who are less confident readers may benefit from reading short books or stories with which they are already familiar. Rereading books is not a waste of time. Rather, it can provide children with a sense of confidence in their reading ability and contribute to their fluency as readers. It also helps them to master a basic sight word vocabulary (e.g., *and, the, for, by,* and *with*).

Sometimes, it may seem to you that your child has simply memorized a book and is not really "reading" the material. However, this memorization serves as a bridge for the child from the spoken word to the printed word. You might even help your child who has memorized a story by asking her to slow down and point to each word as it is said out loud. You might also say a word in the "memorized" text and ask the child to locate it.

In addition, often children who are struggling with a word are asked to "sound it out." This can be a tedious and laborious process. It may disrupt the flow of reading so that the child loses his train of thought or the natural spoken rhythm of the sentence. It is often more helpful if you simply supply the unknown word for the child. However, if the child is rereading a passage, already knows the context, and stumbles on a word, taking the time to notice the letter sounds of the unknown word can be a good practice for improving reading ability.

In conclusion, reread those wonderful children's book. You will find a great list of children's books at the end of this document.

8. Reading Writing Connection: Supporting Independent Writing

"Children are like wet cement; whatever falls on them makes an impression."
Haim Ginott

Parents often wonder whether reading or writing skills develop first. Although most parents think reading develops first, researchers have suggested that for some children it is the desire to write that emerges first. You may have had the same thought when you saw your child pick up writing utensils and use them to make marks on any available surface including the walls. In reality, reading and writing seem to develop simultaneously from children's self-initiated play and become mutually reinforcing.

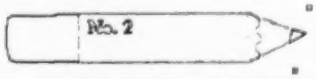
Parents can support this natural development by helping young children see themselves as readers and writers. The example of writing is "pretend writing," when children sketch lines and scribbles in an attempt to imitate adults' writing behavior. As young children learn the alphabet and the sounds that letters make, some children will begin to use phonetic spelling by attempting to spell words based on the sounds of the letters. For example, they might phonetically write "cat" as "kt." This is a normal part of writing development. Parents should show children how to write and spell words whenever they show interest. In the meantime, show children how to write their names, encourage them to write or trace letters and to play pretend writing.

Reading And Writing Materials

Parents can encourage children to write by providing a special place equipped with a variety of interesting materials. It might be good to have a child-sized table or desk and low, open shelves but it isn't essential, a

designated chair at the kitchen table will work equally well. The only really important point to remember is that children are social, therefore, don't separate this space from other family activities. Also, a bulletin board to display finished work is wonderful. Show your pride in your child's achievements. Here are some suggested materials to have available:

- magnet boards with alphabet numbers and letters
- magnetic poetry
- chalkboards and chalk
- alphabet and number tiles
- puzzles

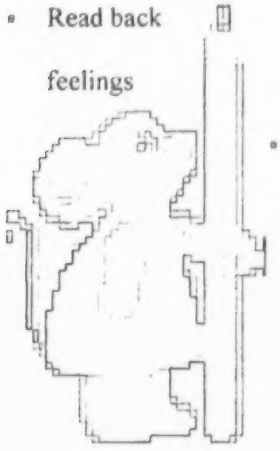


- stamps and stamp pads
- clipboards and file folders
- envelopes and paper (different sizes, colors, lined and unlined)
- junk mail, catalogues, magazines, coupons
- mailbag or mailbox (recycle an old handbag or shoebox)
- pencils (regular and colored) and pens
- crayons and markers (nontoxic, thick and thin)
- paints and brushes
- bookmaking materials (stapler, hole punch, yarn, scissors)

Graphics a Available online http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Thebes/9673/graphic2.htm

Suggested Activities

- Write down stories your child dictates to you. This helps your child understand that what is said can be permanently saved in print.
- Read back what your child has "written." This reinforces the child feelings of being a writer.



- Encourage your child to "read" the writing to you. Don't worry if the story changes with each reading. This is normal!
- Write messages to your child. When you need to be away, leave a message to be read to your child.

- Write down your child's ideas and hang them on the refrigerator
- Ask your children to dictate their stories or impressions after a field trip for the teacher.
- Create a lists of your child's favorite foods or toys
- Label your child's possessions. Your child's favorite word is her name. She will want to see it written on everything!
- Write letters and pass notes. Instead of talking during dinner, try writing notes to one another. Passing notes is always fun!
- Keep a Journal

  One way to help children learn to read is to write (with the child) a few short sentences each day in a journal. It is most effective when the child dictates to you what to write down. Next the child copies what you wrote and then illustrates the short "story. Each time you and the child write together, the child is encouraged to review and reread some of the previous entries. The picture that the child draws will become a reminder of what the text says. In this way the child becomes familiar with common words that reappear frequently in reading (such as is, am, did, had, or it). She will begin to remember these words because of their frequent reoccurrence in natural speech. This method helps keep the repetition needed to remember these words from becoming monotonous or artificial.
- Encourage your child to use inventive or independent spelling.

  At early stages, the child will tend to omit letters and confuse letter names and letter sounds, producing such spellings as "lent" for elephant, "say" for bean, and "fare" for

fairy. Encourage your child to look at how words are spelled and assist him/her in learning word patterns and families in later spelling development stages.

- Make up a simple story or use a familiar folktale to create a "fill-in-the blank" story. For example, write, "Once upon a time there were _____. They told their _____ they were going out to seek their _____." Your child then fills in the story. Using invented or temporary spellings is a good strategy. It tells you the sounds your child hears in words.
- Model writing. Write down stories your child's dictates to you. This helps your child understand strategies you use when you write. This also gives him opportunities to read and spell common words like *what, there,* and *because.*
- Create magazine puppets. With your child look through an old magazine. Talk about several pictures, making up a story about each one. Then have your child cut out pictures of animals or people from the magazine. Next, tape or glue each picture to a craft stick and have your child use the pictures as puppets. You and your child can now act out a pretend story with the puppets.

Parent - teacher Guide for
CAPITAL LETTERS A B C ...

All the letters start at the top!

Left handed? Left handed people prefer to make horizontal lines from right to left, pulling into the hand. Make sure you don't "correct" this as it is natural, and not a problem

Parent- teacher Guide for Numbers 1 2 3 ...
All the numbers start at the top!

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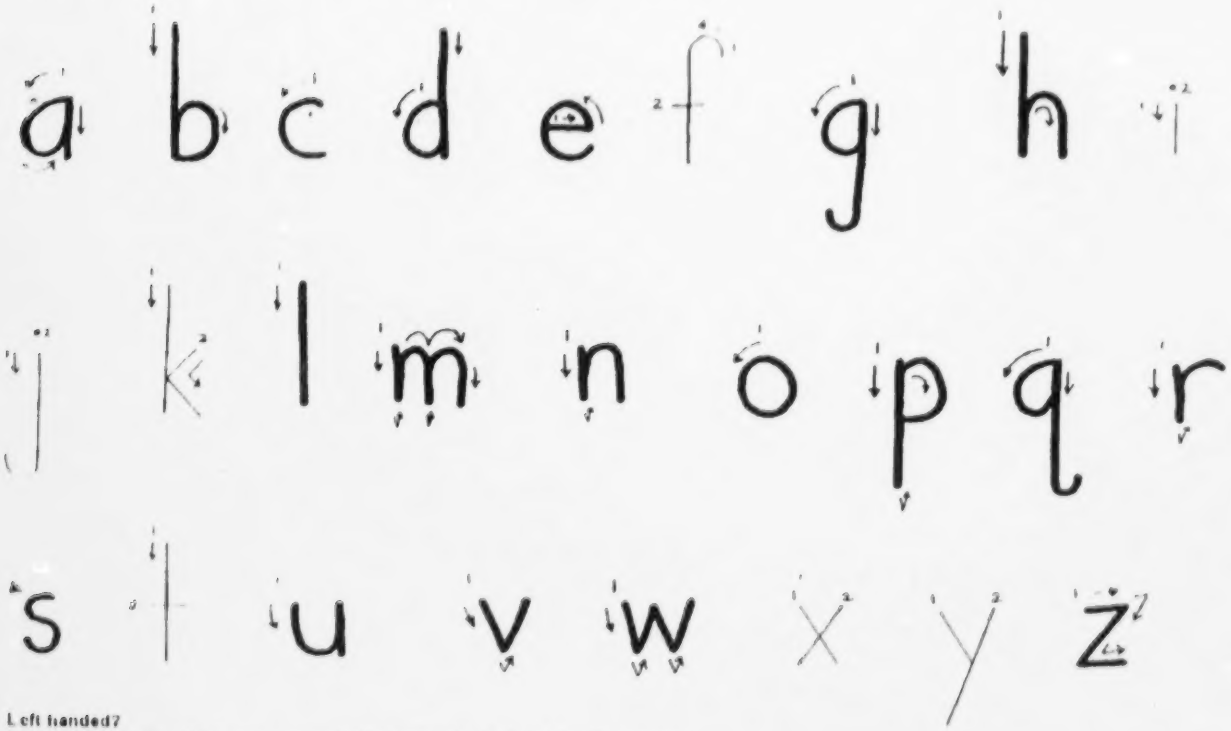
Letter formation for lower-case letters -

— Use just one continuous stroke!

— Use just two strokes!



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Left handed?
Left handed people prefer to make horizontal lines from right to left, pulling into the hand
Make this exception for left handed students

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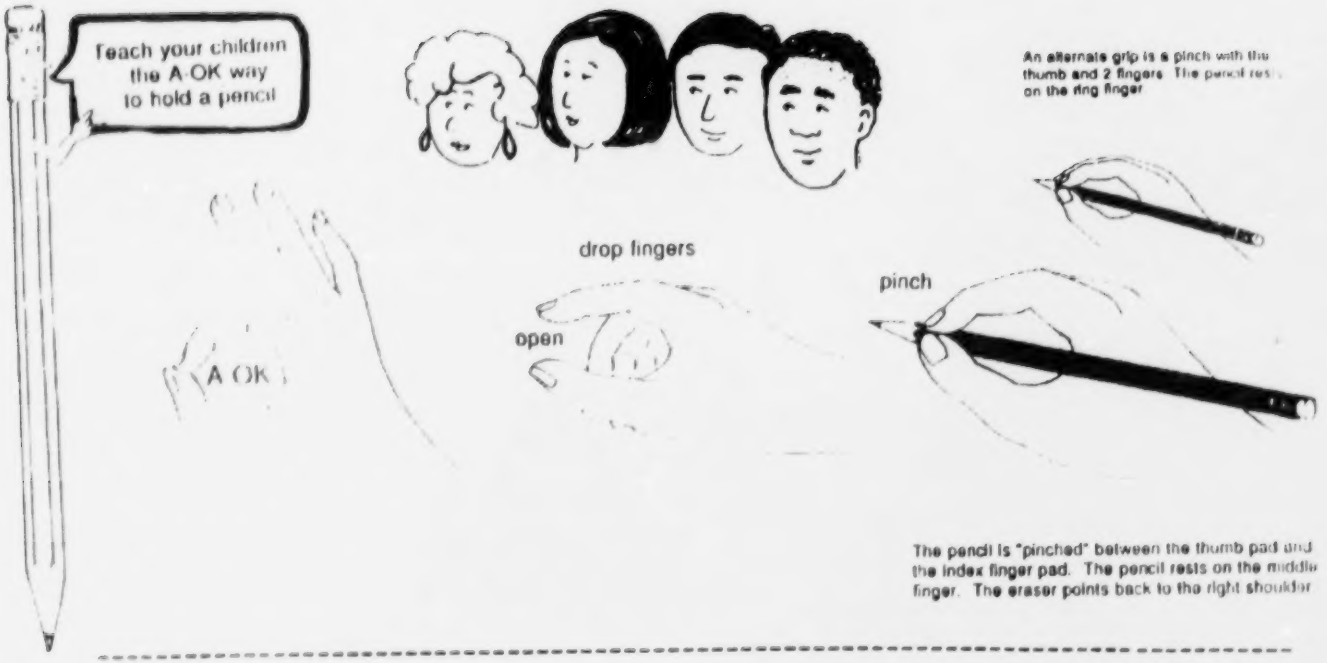
Teach your children the A-OK way to hold a pencil
A OK
drop fingers
open
An alternate grip is a pinch with the thumb and 2 fingers. The pencil rests on the ring finger
pinch
The pencil is "pinched" between the thumb pad and the index finger pad. The pencil rests on the middle finger. The eraser points back to the right shoulder

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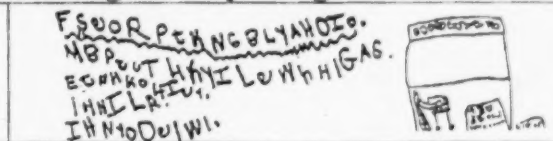
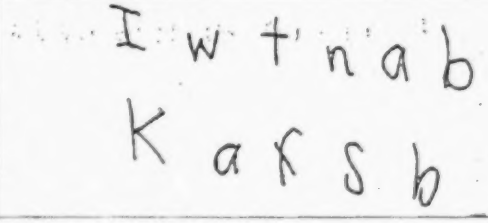
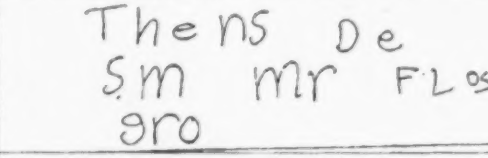
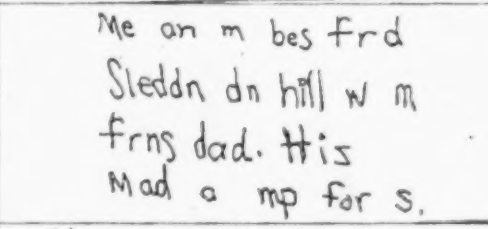
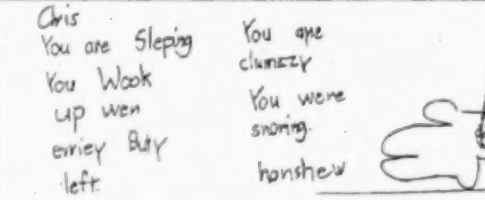
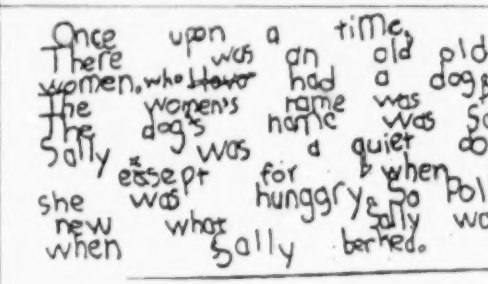
10. Developmental Stages of Spelling

Adapted from a Wright Group publication

Developmental Stages of Spelling	
Beginnings **Translation:** My Mom took us to the store to get some tomato juice.	
Consonants Child writes one letter, usually the first one heard, to represent the entire word. **Translation:** I went out in a boat and caught a fish this big.	
Initial and Final Consonants Child writes the first and last sounds to represent the word. **Translation:** The next day some more flowers grew.	
Vowel/Consonant Combinations Child starts using consonants and vowels in the middle of words. **Translation:** Me and my best friend sledding downhill with my friend's Dad. his (Dad) made a jump for us.	
Words Child's writing shows all syllables in the words. **Translation:** Chris, You were sleeping. You woke up when everybody left. You are clumsy. You were snoring. Zzzz.	
Standard Spelling Child begins to build a repertoire of spelling patterns, and develop an extensive bank of sight words. **Translation:** Once upon a time, there was an old woman who had a dog. The woman's name was Polly. The dog's name was Sally. Sally was a quiet dog, except for when she was hungry. So Polly knew what Sally wanted when Sally barked.	

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11. Writing in Kindergarten

Stages and Forms of Writing	
Stages	**Characteristics**
Picture Writing	• pictures represent the story
Writing-like Responses	• scribbling • imitation of adult writing • may include lines and squiggles
Recognizable Letters	• random letters • writing may look like labeling or may show some evidence of linearity or sentence-like
Increased Organization	• letters go from left to right on the page • writing may include random letters, initial letters, numbers • writing is characterized by complete thoughts
Sound/Symbol	• writing uses initial sounds of words (consonants) • writing is characterized by complete thoughts
Length of Written Work Increases	• writing is characterized by invented spelling • progresses from dependence on teacher to independence • initial and final sounds evident • spacing begins to appear between words • writing is characterized by complete thoughts
Move to Independence	• child writes complete thoughts independently • medial sounds appear • writing is characterized by complete thoughts
Invented & Conventional Spelling Mixed	• child mixes invented and conventional spelling • writing shows all syllables being represented • high frequency words such as *I, red, and, the,* are spelled correctly • writing is characterized by complete thoughts
Early Writing	• child writes multiple related sentences • many words are spelled correctly • some evidence of punctuation

12. 100 Picture Books Everyone Should Know

Abuela by Arthur Dorros. Illustrated by Elisa Kleven. Dutton.
Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst. Illustrated by Ray Cruz. Atheneum.
Animals Should Definitely Not Wear Clothing by Judi Barrett. Illustrated by Ron Barrett. Atheneum.
Anansi and the Moss-Covered Rock by Eric A. Kimmel. Illustrated by Janet Stevens. Holiday House.
Andy and the Lion by James Daugherty. Viking.
Ben's Trumpet by Rachel Isadora. Greenwillow.
Blueberries for Sal by Robert McCloskey. Viking.
The Bossy Gallito: A Traditional Cuban Folktale retold by Lucia M. Gonzalez. Illustrated by Lulu Delacre. Scholastic.
Bread and Jam For Frances by Russell Hoban. Illustrated by Lillian Hoban. HarperCollins.
Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin Jr. Illustrated by Eric Carle. Holt.
Caps for Sale: A Tale of a Peddler, Some Monkeys and Their Monkey Business by Esphyr Slobodkina. HarperCollins.
The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss. Illustrated by Crockett Johnson. HarperCollins.
A Chair for my Mother by Vera B. Williams. Greenwillow.
Chick Chick Boom Boom by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault. Illustrated by Lois Ehlert. Simon & Schuster.
Corduroy by Don Freeman. Viking.
Curious George by H. A. Rey. Houghton.
The Day Jimmy's Boa Ate the Wash by Trinka H. Noble. Illustrated by Steven Kellogg. Dial.
Dear Zoo by Rod Campbell. Simon & Schuster.
Doctor De Soto by William Steig. Farrar.
Farmer Duck by Martin Waddell. Illustrated by Helen Oxenbery. Candlewick Press.
The Fortune-tellers by Lloyd Alexander. Illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman. Dutton.
Freight Train by Donald Crews. Greenwillow.
George and Martha by James Marshall. Houghton.
Go Away, Big, Green Monster! by Ed Emberley. Little, Brown.
Good Night, Gorilla by Peggy Rathmann. Putnam.
Goodnight Moon by Margaret W. Brown. Illustrated by Clement Hurd. HarperCollins.
Grandfather's Journey by Allen Say. Houghton.
Happy Birthday, Moon by Frank Asch. Simon & Schuster.
Harold and the Purple Crayon by Crockett Johnson. HarperCollins.
Harry the Dirty Dog by Gene Zion. Illustrated by Margaret Graham. HarperCollins.
Henny Penny illustrated by Paul Galdone. Clarion.
Horton Hatches an Egg by Dr. Seuss. Random House.
I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly illustrated by Glen Rounds. Holiday House.
If you Give a Mouse A Cookie by Laura J. Numeroff. Illustrated by Felicia Bond. HarperCollins.

Is it Red? Is it Yellow? Is it Blue An Adventure in Color by Tana Hoban. Greenwillow.
It Could Always Be Worse: A Yiddish Folktale retold and illustrated by Margot Zemach. Farrar.
John Henry by Julius Lester. Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. Dial.
The Judge: An Untrue Tale by Harve Zemach. Illustrated by Margot Zemach. Viking.
Julius by Angela Johnson. Illustrated by Dav Pilkey. Orchard.
Komodo! by Peter Sis. Greenwillow.
Leo the Late Bloomer by Robert Kraus. Illustrated by Jose Aruego. HarperCollins.
Little Blue and Little Yellow by Leo Lionni. Astor-Honor.
The Little Dog Laughed and Other Nursery Rhymes by Lucy Cousins. Dutton.
the Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything by Linda Williams. Illustrated by Megan Lloyd. HarperCollins.
Little Red Riding Hood retold and illustrated by Paul Galdone. McGraw-Hill.
Lunch by Denise Fleming. Holt.
Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile by Bernard Waber. Houghton.
Madeline by Ludwig Bemelmans. Viking.
Maisie Goes Swimming by Lucy Cousins. Little, Brown.
Make Way for Ducklings by Robert McCloskey. Viking.
Martha Calling by Susan Meddaugh. Houghton.
Mike Mulligan and his Steam Shovel by Virginia L. Burton. Houghton.
Millions of Cats by Wanda Gág. Putnam.
Miss Nelson is Missing by Harry Allard and James Marshall. Illustrated by James Marshall. Houghton.
Mr. Gumpy's Outing by John Burningham. Holt.
The Monkey and the Crocodile retold and illustrated by Paul Galdone. Clarion.
Morris' Disappearing Bag by Rosemary Wells. Dial.
Mouse Paint by Ellen S. Walsh. Harcourt.
Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale retold and illustrated by John Steptoe. Lothrop.
Mushroom in the Rain adapted from the Russian of V. Suteyev by Mirra Ginsburg. Illustrated by Jose Aruego and Ariane Dewey. Simon & Schuster.
The Napping House by Audrey Wood. Illustrated by Don Wood. Harcourt.
Officer Buckle and Gloria by Peggy Rathmann. Putnam.
Old Black Fly by Jim Aylesworth. Illustrated by Stephen Gammell. Holt.
Over in the Meadow by John Langstaff. Illustrated by Feodor Rojankovsky. Harcourt.
Owen by Kevin Henkes. Greenwillow.
Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me by Eric Carle. Simon & Schuster.
Perez and Martina by Pura Belpré. Illustrated by Carlos Sanchez. Viking.
Pierre: A Cautionary Tale by Maurice Sendak. HarperCollins.
The Polar Express by Chris Van Allsburg. Houghton.
The Random House of Mother Goose: A Treasury of 365 Timeless Nursery Rhymes selected and illustrated by Arnold Lobel. Random House.
Rosie's Walk by Pat Hutchins. Simon & Schuster.
Round Trip by Ann Jonas. Greenwillow.
Rumplestiltskin retold and illustrated by Paul O. Zelinsky. Dutton.
Seven Blind Mice by Ed Young. Putnam.

The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats. Viking.
Stone Soup retold and illustrated by Marcia Brown. Simon & Schuster.
The Story of Babar, The Little Elephant by Jean de Brunhoff. Random.
The Story of Ferdinand by Munro Leaf. Illustrated by Robert Lawson. Viking.
Strega Nona by Tomie De Paola. Simon & Schuster.
Swamp Angel by Anne Isaacs. Illustrated by Paul O. Zelinsky. Dutton.
Swimmy by Leo Lionni. Knopf.
Sylvester and the Magic Pebble by William Steig. Simon & Schuster.
The Tale of Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter. Warne.
Ten, Nine, Eight by Molly Bang. Greenwillow.
There's a Nightmare in my Closet by Mercer Mayer. Dial.
The Three Billy Goats Gruff by P.C. Asbjfrnsen and J.E. Moe. Illustrated by Marcia Brown. Harcourt.
The Three Robbers by Tomi Ungerer. Atheneum.
Tikki, Tikki Tembo retold by Arlene Mosel. Illustrated by Blair Lent. Holt.
The True Story of the Three Little Pigs by A Wolf as told to John Scieszka. Illustrated by Lane Smith. Viking.
Tuesday by David Wiesner. Houghton.
Two of Everything: A Chinese Folktale retold and illustrated by Lily Toy Hong. Whitman.
The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle. Philomel.
We're Going on a Bear Hunt retold by Michael Rosen. Illustrated by Helen Oxenbury. McElderry.
The Wheels on the Bus adapted and illustrated by Paul O. Zelinsky. Dutton.
When I Was Young in the Mountains by Cynthia Rylant. Illustrated by Diane Goode. Dutton.
Where The wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak. HarperCollins.
Where's Spot? by Eric Hill. Putnam.
Whistle for Willie by Ezra Jack Keats. Viking.
Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears: A West African Tale retold by Verna Aardema. Illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon. Dial.
Zomo the Rabbit: A Trickster Tale From West Africa retold and illustrated by Gerald McDermott. Harcourt.
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